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C O N F I D E N T I A L DHAKA 003073

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/30/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [BG](#)

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR PAYS FAREWELL CALL ON PM

Classified By: A/DCM D.C. McCullough, reason para 1.4 (b)

1. (C) On June 30, Ambassador Thomas paid his farewell call on PM Khaleda Zia. He was accompanied by EconOff as notetaker. The Ambassador thanked the PM for her continued cooperation with USG efforts and for her willingness to meet with USG visitors to Dhaka, most recently U/S Burns. He conveyed USG appreciation for BDG commitment and "full partnership" in the War on Terror. He applauded her administration's development initiatives in critical areas like population control, consistent GDP growth, attracting foreign investment, making the streets cleaner and safer, and investing in infrastructure development with fly-overs in the city. He also highlighted Bangladesh's significant progress in the telecommunications sector.

2. (C) The Ambassador expressed respect for the PM's leadership and said that he was confident that the BDG would do its best to ensure free and fair elections in Bangladesh. He offered USG assistance in this regard in any area. He mentioned that USAID's programs continue to grow and thrive in Bangladesh and the Peace Corps is increasing its volunteers from 70 to 150 in the next year. He also talked about the success of USAID's new TV program "Sisimpur." The Ambassador also mentioned the Embassy's upcoming Bangladesh Road Show in the U.S. as another USG effort to further positive relations between the two countries.

3. (C) The Ambassador mentioned some upcoming USG visits to Bangladesh, including the Peace Corps Director next month. He thanked senior cabinet ministers for their cooperation with the USG and thanked the PM's principal secretary, Dr. Kamal Siddiqui, for his candor and openness with USG officials.

4. (C) He applauded the PM and the work of her sister, the minister for women's and children's affairs, on human trafficking. He said that BDG's efforts in this area were publicly mentioned and appreciated.

5. (C) The PM thanked the Ambassador for his work in Bangladesh and hoped he would continue to serve as an advocate for strong US-Bangladesh relations.

THOMAS